

REMARKS

The above amendments to the above-captioned application along with the following remarks are being submitted as a full and complete response to the Office Action dated November 30, 2005. In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, the Examiner is respectfully requested to give due reconsideration to this application, to indicate the allowability of the claims, and to pass this case to issue.

Status of the Claims

Claims 1-8 are under consideration in this application. Claim 5 is being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 1-2 are being amended, as set forth above and in the attached marked-up presentation of the claim amendments, in order to more particularly define and distinctly claim Applicants' invention. Claim 8 is being added to recite another embodiment described in the specification.

All the amendments to the specification and the claims are supported by the specification, especially Figs. 2-4. Applicants hereby submit that no new matter is being introduced into the application through the submission of this response.

Formality Rejection

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. As indicated, claim 5 is being cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, the rejection thus becomes moot.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by US Pat. No. 4,832,077 of Pilolla (hereinafter "Pilolla"). The remaining references listed by the Examiner in the attached Form PTO-892 were not relied upon but were nonetheless considered pertinent to the disclosure of the invention. The above rejection has been carefully considered, but is most respectfully traversed.

The fluid control valve of the invention (for example, the embodiment depicted in Figs. 1-2), as now recited in claim 1, comprises: a valve body 4; an annular groove portion (e.g., 9) formed in an outer periphery of the valve body 4; and a filter 25 provided in the groove portion 9, the filter 25 including a plate with a plurality of perforations and formed

into a cylindrical shape, the filter 25 being fastened to the groove portion 9 by winding a snap ring 27 formed from a thin bar bent into a loop around an outer periphery of the filter 25 in circumferential direction (Figs. 3-4; p. 4, 2nd to the last paragraph). One end 29 of the snap ring 27 extends along an axial direction of the snap ring 27 toward one of opposite side surfaces of the outer periphery of the filter 25 defining the groove portion 9, and other end 29 of the snap ring 27 extends along an axial direction of the snap ring toward other of the opposed side surfaces.

The invention has two ends 29 of the snap ring 27 extend oppositely along an axial direction of the snap ring 27 and contact the respective opposed side surfaces to minimize vibration of the snap ring 27 when the snap ring 27 moves in the axial direction.

Applicants contend that the cited references fail to teach or suggest such a “snap ring 27 formed from a thin bar bent into a loop around an outer periphery of the filter 25 in circumferential direction and with two ends 29 thereof extending oppositely along an axial direction of the snap ring 27” according to the invention.

Pilolla merely provides a filtered stop having a cylindrical filter 86 and a retainer ring 40. The retainer ring 40 snaps into and conforms to the notched recess 36 formed on the surface of the housing 12. Although Pilolla’s retainer ring 40 (Fig. 5) is substantially annular (col. 2, line 42) and appears to be wound around the outer periphery of the filter 86 in a circumferential direction so as to have its outer wall 44 snapped into the recess 36 (col. 2, lines 39-46), the outer wall 44 (arguably equivalent to ends of the retainer ring 40) extend in the *same* direction (rather than “*oppositely*”) towards the left side of the Fig. 5 along an axial direction of the retainer ring 40. In addition, Pilolla does not overlap any portions of the retainer ring 40 like the invention recited in claim 8.

Other references fail to compensate for Pilolla’s deficiencies. For example, Re. Pat. No. 33.135 and US Pat. No. 3,006,371 do not disclose any snap rings. As another example, US Pat. No. 5,062,454 to Ichihashi et al. discloses a spool control valve 140 having a filter 145 and a snap-ring 144 (Fig. 9). The snap-ring 144 affixes the filter 145 in the first communicating passage 142 (col. 8, lines 57-58) such that it is disposed at only one side surface of the filter 145 (Fig. 9) and does not appear to be wound around the outer periphery of the filter 145 in a circumferential direction. The snap-ring 144 further does not have ends extending oppositely along an axial direction of the snap-ring 144, nor overlap any portions of the snap-ring 144 like the invention recited in claim 8.

Applicants contend that the cited references or their combinations fail to teach or

disclose each and every feature of the present invention as disclosed in the independent claim 1. As such, the present invention as now claimed is distinguishable and thereby allowable over the rejections raised in the Office Action. The withdrawal of the outstanding prior art rejections is in order, and is respectfully solicited.

Conclusion

In view of all the above, clear and distinct differences as discussed exist between the present invention as now claimed and the prior art reference upon which the rejections in the Office Action rely, Applicants respectfully contend that the prior art references cannot anticipate the present invention or render the present invention obvious. Rather, the present invention as a whole is distinguishable, and thereby allowable over the prior art.

Favorable reconsideration of this application is respectfully solicited. Should there be any outstanding issues requiring discussion that would further the prosecution and allowance of the above-captioned application, the Examiner is invited to contact the Applicants' undersigned representative at the address and phone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

Stanley P. Fisher
Registration Number 24,344

Juan Carlos A. Marquez
Registration Number 34,072

REED SMITH LLP
3110 Fairview Park Drive, Suite 1400
Falls Church, Virginia 22042
(703) 641-4200

February 28, 2006

SPF/JCM/JT